kilograms, and another one about 1 kilogram. They are worth 8.5 million U.S. dollars. They are in a Swiss Bank. But they wanted to auction it and there is a court case pending with one of the Cantons of Switzerland. That much of action the Archaeological Survey of India has taken in that regard. But, Sir, regarding the other things, we do not have any mandate.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now, next question. Question No. 563; Shrimati Chandresh Kumari. ...(*Interruptions*)... We have already spent fifteen minutes on this question ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: Mr. Chairman, Sir ... ...(*Interruptions*)...

MR. CHAIRMAN: On the first question, we had half-an-hour; and this question has taken fifteen minutes. ...(*Interruptions*)... No; no, I know; there are twenty Members who want to put their supplementaries. ...(*Interruptions*)...

SHRI N.K.P. SALVE: Sir, I do not challenge your authority, but whoever catches your eye must get a chance, and I was one of the first Members who raised his hand.

MR. CHAIRMAN: I wanted to give you a chance to put your supplementary on this question. But Dr. M.N. Das had given a lot of information rather than put the question.

Shortage of drinking water in Himachal Pradesh

*563. SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Will the Minister of RURAL DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether acute shortage of safe drinking water, because of insufficient rainfall and snowfall during current winter season in Himachal Pradesh, has been reported to Government recently;

(b) whether Government have been requested to provide special Central assistance to Himachal Pradesh to enable State Government to undertake various projects to augment drinking water supply in rural areas of the State; and

(c) if so, the details thereof with action taken on these requests so far?

THE MINISTER OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT (SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU): (a) to (c) A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

Statement

(a) and (b) While monitoring the rainfall data when last monsoon was coming to an end, it was observed that in parts of Himachal Pradesh, there was deficient rainfall. In view of this, the State Government was asked to carry out detailed survey of the drought-affected areas of the State to identify the villages/habitations, which are likely to experience shortage of drinking water and prepare specific action plan to meet this shortage.

The State Government submitted a memorandum dated December 27, 2000 and sought financial assistance to the tune of Rs. 21.67 crores for tackling drought situation, inter-alia, which also included Rs. 11.67 crores for drinking water. The State Government reported that due to deficient rainfall, there is shortage of drinking water in 7 districts of the State and proposed installation of handpumps and transportation of drinking water to mitigate the problem.

Later, State Government submitted a revised memorandum dated January 20, 2001 and sought Rs. 80.25 crores for relief and rehabilitation measures to mitigate the problem caused by the drought in the State. In this memorandum, a sum of Rs. 26.29 crores has been sought for drinking water for the installation of handpumps, transportation of water through mules, trucks/tankers, tapping of additional traditional water sources, etc. Recently, the State Government submitted the action plan for mitigation of drinking water problems in 12 districts of the State, which includes activities like repair of non-functional handpumps, transportation augmentation, cleaning of traditional sources, etc. and it has been reported that a sum of Rs. 32.40 crores shall be required for the implementation of this contingency plan.

(c) Under the existing system of financing relief expenditure, the State Governments are primarily concerned with relief and rehabilitation measures in the wake of natural calamities. The Central Government supplements the efforts of the State Governments by

providing financial assistance from Calamity Relief Fund (CPF) and National Calamity Contingency Fund (NCCF), in accordance with the recommendations of the Finance Commissions appointed from time to time, the latest being 11th Finance Commission (2000—2005). In the wake of reported drought in the State, the Government of India deputed an inter-ministerial team to assess the drought situation and the team visited the State during March 27-30, 2001. The report of the team is awaited. However, during 2000-2001, a sum Rs. 32.61 crores as Centre's share from CRF to the State Government has been released. In addition, Rs. 33.29 crores has been approved to the State from NCCF in the wake of flash floods of July-August, 2000, out of which Rs. 8.29 crores has also been released. The funds released under CRF and NCCF can also be utilised for providing relief by mitigating the drinking water problem along with other activities.

So far as rural drinking water supply is concerned, it is a State subject. Government of India supplements the efforts of the States by providing financial assistance under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP) and Prime Minister's Gramodaya Yojna (PMGY)—Rural Drinking Water. During 2000-2001, Rs. 53.85 crores under ARWSP and Rs. 30.77 crores under PMGY—Rural Drinking Water have been released to the State Government. Further, to facilitate the mitigation efforts, in view of the prevailing scarcity of drinking water in rural areas of the State on account of drought, the priorities fixed in the ARWSP guidelines has been relaxed by the Government of India to the extent that the funds under ARWSP and PMGY—Rural Drinking Water could also be utilised for activities relating to repair, rejuvenation, renovation, restoration and replacement of existing rural drinking water schemes in areas affected by scarcity of drinking water in the State.

SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Sir, the hon. Minister has made the statement in which he has said that the Central Government had instructed the State Governments to assess the drought situation in their States after the monsoon season, which was a failure. The Government of Himachal Pradesh on the 27th of December sent its first memorandum, requesting an assistance of Rs. 11.67 crores for drinking water. The second reminder was sent on

the 20th of January and the demand became Rs. 26.29 crores; the third reminder was sent recently and now the demand is Rs. 32.40 crores. These requests have been coming to the Centre, but the Centre, after having instructed the State Government to assess, sent its team to Himachal Pradesh to assess the situation only on 27.03.2000. Now, they have said that they have not still received the report. Sir, I would like to know from the Minister: Are they going to assess the situation of drought in Himachal Pradesh and the shortage of drinking after the people die and after one more monsoon ends? I would like to know from the Minister: How soon are they going to help the State Government to see that people get drinking water. Is he aware that there are many areas where for 10 days together people have not even got a drop of drinking water? What steps will the Government take to help the people of Himachal Pradedh?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: Mr. Chairman, Sir, the problem of drinking water is basically dealt with by the State Government. However, from time to time, the Central Government monitors the situation. As and when any request comes, we would be talking to the State Government and find out whether the money that is already available with them has been utilised or not. In this particular instance of Himachal Pradesh, I would like to inform the House, Sir, that the State Government is having an amount of Rs. 56.40 crores as at the end of March. That being the case, there is no dearth of funds as such. Sir, under the Accelerated Rural Water Supply Programme (ARWSP), an amount of Rs. 30.37 crores is available with them. Under the Minimum Needs Programme, Rs. 12.86 crores is available with them; and, under the PMGY Programme, Rs. 13.17 crores is available with them. That means, in total, a sum of Rs. 56.40 crores is available with them. As far as the question relating to the action taken by the Government of India is concerned, Sir, I would like to say that we have released both the instalments that are due to the State of Himachal Pradesh from the Central Government's fund. And, secondly, after reviewing the situation in 8 States, including the State of Himachal Pradesh, where drought conditions are prevailing and scarcity of drinking water is

also reported to the Ministry, I myself have taken a decision to relax the conditions of the ARWSP. Sir, normally, the ARWSP funds are spent only for new schemes, but, keeping in view the situation, we have taken a decision and intimated to all the State Governments, including Himachal Pradesh, that 20 per cent of the ARWSP funds can be spent on upgradation, rejuvenation and also for repairing of the hand pumps. In addition to this, Sir, the Central Government has sent a team of officers to Himachal Pradesh. The officers have gone there and their report is awaited. And, there is also the Calamity Relief Fund (CRF), which is due to the States. The amount under the Calamity Relief Fund has also been released. I have already said it in my reply. There is scarcity of drinking water in 12 districts of Himachal Pradesh. Sir, Rs. 32.61 crores is the share of the State of the Himachal Pradesh under the CRF. It has already been released. Another amount of Rs. 8.29 crores has also been released to the State under the National Calamity Contingency Fund. I may also inform the House that, after assessing the situation yesterday, in view of the scarcity of drinking water in that particular State, I have also released this year's money also, Rs. 27.76 crores, without waiting for the other formalities of receiving the utilisation certificate from the State. We are in touch with the State Government from time to time. We are monitoring the situation, and we are giving the necessary guidance. If the Member gives any other suggestion or brings to my notice any other information, I am ready to act on that.

SHRIMATI CHANDRESH KUMARI: Sir, the Minister has mentioned in his reply and he has mentioned it just now also that under the NCCF scheme, they have released Rs. 33.29 crores. These flash floods in Kinnaur took place in the month of July. This amount was approved at that time, in the month of July-August. But, out of that, only Rs. 8.29 crores has been given. When is the balance going to be given? If they are going to take so many months—it is ten months now since the flash floods took place, and in ten months, they have released only Rs. 8.29 crores—how can the State Government help the people in that area? If the same situation is going to arise during the drought and there is no drinking water, will water be supplied to them after the monsoon starts?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: The Member is right when she said that out of the sanctioned amount of Rs. 33.29 crores from the National Calamity Contingency Fund, only Rs. 8.29 crores has been released. The Agriculture Ministry makes these releases. If was part of the question. The Agriculture Ministry gives the funds. I have obtained the information from them. They are waiting for the Finance Bill to be passed because there seems to be lack of money. Once it is passed, it will be released immediately. But, as I said, from my side, the money that was available, Rs. 21.6 crores has been released. There is no dearth of funds as far as the State of Himachal Pradesh is concerned.

Sir, there are areas and terrains that are not accessible, even to transport drinking water. That problem is there. We have asked them to prepare an action plan to meet the shortage of drinking water. We have also asked them to transport drinking water by road or by other means, in whatever manner it is possible. But, as far as Himachal Pradesh is concerned, there is no scope for transport of water by train too. Otherwise, we would have taken up that also. We have asked them to utilise the locally available natural resources, wherever they are available. Some action has been taken by the State also. We have also requested them to involve NGOs and major private and public sector undertakings and charitable organisations in taking up relief measures and to encourage the people to adopt household-level disinfection programmes also. We have told them to take up the IEC campaign to generate awareness about the need for conservation of water.

Sir, three things are. One is giving the money The second is giving the needed guidance. The third is periodical monitoring of the schemes. This is the responsibility of the Central Government. We have been doing this.

With regard to the release of the second instalment of the NCC Fund, I have already taken it up with the Agriculture Ministry to release it at the earliest.

श्री कृपाल परमार: सभापति जी, आपके माध्यम से मैं माननीय मंत्री जी से जानना चाहता हूं कि हिमाचल प्रदेश भौगोलिक स्थिति के हिसाब से पूरे देश में अपनी एक अलग पहचान रखता है और जितनी नदियां इस प्रदेश में बहती हैं, वे लगभग पूरे उत्तरी भारत को, राजस्थान समेत, पानी पिलाने का इंतजाम करती हैं। जब पहाड़ों पर बर्फ गिरती है तब भी हम उसमें दबते हैं और जब बाढ़ आती है तो तब भी हम बहते हैं। लेकिन इसके बावजूद हमारे 90 फीसदी जो गांव हैं वे गर्मियों के दिनों में प्यासे रहते हैं। मैं मंत्री महोदय से जानना चाहता हूं कि उन्होंने जो पायलेट प्रोजक्ट स्कीम शुरू की है, क्या उसके तहत हिमाचल प्रदेश के गांवों को लाभान्वित करने की कोई योजना है? अगर है, तो यह कितने गांवों में है और चालू वित्त वर्ष में इसके लिए कितना पैसा स्वीकृत किया गया है?

SHRI M. VENKAIAH NAIDU: I can sympathise with the Member for the situation in the State. But this question that he has asked about the pilot projects in the State of Himachal Pradesh does not come within the purview of the main question. I can collect the information and provide it to the Member at the earliest.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Mr. Ramachandraiah, is your question about Himachal Pradesh?

SHRI C. RAMACHANDRAIAH: No, Sir. It is about Andhra Pradesh.

MR. CHAIRMAN: No.

Prof. Bharati Ray, does your question relate to Himachal Pradesh? ...(*Interruptions*)...

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Can I not refer to the Minister's answer?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This question relates to Himachal Pradesh.

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: I know it. I have seen the question, sir.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us not raise other things.

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: I just want to refer to the Minister's reply. Can I not put a question on the hon. Minister's answer to the question?

MR. CHAIRMAN: This question is regarding...

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: I have seen the question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Let us not do that. Mr. Moolchand Meena.

श्री मूल चन्द मीणाः सवाल सूखे से संबंधित है ...**(व्यवधान)**

श्री राजू परमारः और इलाके भी हैं जहां ऐसी सिचुयेशन है ...**(व्यवधान)**

MR. CHAIRMAN: Then we take the next question. Shri Ravi Shankar Prasad.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Q. No. 564.

PROF. (SHRIMATI) BHARATI RAY: Sir, Can I put a question on Himachal Pradesh; I think, I can.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Yes, on Himachal Pradesh, you can put.

SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Sir, I have already put my question.

MR. CHAIRMAN: Now we have moved to the next question. You have been asking many questions. So, it does not matter.

Criteria for VIP Security

*564. SHRI RAVI SHANKAR PRASAD: Will the Minister of HOME AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the report appearing in the 'Hindustan Times' dated 1st March, 2001, under the caption "Need for a scanning criteria for securitymen"; and

(b) if so, the steps being taken by Government for tightening the criteria for deploying commandos and security personnel on security duty with VIPs and at strategic points?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HOME AFFAIRS (SHRI CHENNAMANENI VIDYA SAGAR RAO): (a) and (b) Yes Sir, Government is aware of these incidents of firing and suicide by the securitymen deployed on VIP protection duties. All these four instances, are under investigation with local police. Before posting police personnel for close protection of highly threatened persons, their previous work and conduct is verified and proper